PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

WAR INFORMATION BUREAU

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LECTURE XXXVIII.

MEDITERRANEAN MATTERS.

(*With acknowledgments to the* ***Illustrated Weekly of India***).

I
MEDITERRANEAN MASTERY.

FROM the very outbreak of the war with Italy, British naval forces have been active in the Mediterranean. All this activity, even before Italy attempted to invade Greece, has had a great effect upon the present campaign in Albania. By this use of sea-power, Britain has given Greece more effective aid than she could have done by landing men and guns and aeroplanes.

But for the British Mediterranean Fleet, which has detachments in both the eastern and western basins, the Italian Fleet would have had complete control of the Mediterranean. Allied or neutral shipping would have been unable to use that sea, while Italian transports, storeships and merchantmen could have used all its ports without hindrance.

Unremitting Activity.

The French naval bases in North Africa might have fallen into Italian hands, while Greece, threatened by Italian sea-power, would have been unable to prevent the Italian occupation of naval and air bases in the Ionian Islands, Crete and the Aegean.

Instead the unremitting activity of the British Mediterranean Fleet, particularly that section of it in the eastern basin under the Command of Sir Andrew Cunningham, has largely paralysed Italian sea-power.

The chase of the Italian fleet to the east of Sicily on July 9; the sinking of the *Bartolomeo Colleoni* by the *Sydney* to the north-west of Crete on July 19; various naval operations and aerial attacks in the Dodecanese; and innumerable bombardments and attacks by naval aircraft upon Italian bases, aerodromes and military concentration points in Libya, Sardinia and elsewhere, have all gone to show that the British Fleet has the mastery of the Mediterranean, and that the Italians are unwilling to challenge it in battle.

But for Sir Andrew Cunningham's fleet, Italy could have sent strong expeditionary forces to Syria, and have isolated Turkey. Indeed, every nation in South-Eastern Europe would have been at the mercy of the combined strength of Italy and Germany.

In the present Greek war in Albania the British Fleet has provided invaluable, though largely invisible, aid to Greece.

Without that Fleet Italian transports, escorted by vessels-of-war, could have landed expeditionary forces in the Gulfs of Patras and Corinth, at Salonika and in Crete.

British naval activity continues. Apart from minor incidents, various attacks in the Mediterranean have been reported during the past six or seven weeks. Naval aircraft have bombed Maltezana, the nearest Italian air base to Athens; Cagliari, in Sardinia; and Port Laki, in Peros, and Tripoli, in Libya, besides their most successful attack upon the enemy fleet at Taranto.

Sidi Barrani and Maktila were bombarded by naval forces and more lately Bardia. British light forces and submarines have carried out successful attacks against Italian convoys and storeships in the Straits of Otranto and elsewhere. On November 27, came the naval engagement west of Sardinia when the Italians sought safety in hurried flight.

Help for Greece.

All these operations, and many others, have a direct effect upon the Greek campaign in Albania—far more effect than if Britain had sent an expeditionary force to Greece, with all the difficulties of supply and transport in a strange and mountainous country.

In short, while Italy has many hostages to fortune and is timid and fearful in the use of her fleet, the British Fleet in the Mediterranean has been employed in a vigorous offensive, which has completely altered the situation in Eastern Europe, if not in the whole world. But for British sea-power Greece would have found her task very much more difficult.

II

MALTA CAN "TAKE IT"

THE defence of Malta against large-scale Nazi and Italian air attacks has aroused the greatest admiration. It had long been realised that the proximity of Italy to this island, which has been Britain's Mediterranean headquarters since the days of Nelson, would inevitably bring upon it the harsh trial of constant air attacks. And Malta has stood up courageously against bombing by Italian planes.

To this has been added of late severe attacks by the *Luftwaffe* from Sicily, which is barely 55 miles from Valetta, the capital and famous harbour of Malta.

But in all these savage attacks—400 and more—on this little island of 95 square miles and some 252,000 inhabitants, the primary object has failed, for though a good deal of damage has been caused, remarkably few soldiers and civilians have been injured or killed.

Despite the closeness of war, life on this island is being carried on with remarkable sangfroid. This cheerfulness and determination to face whatever may be in store for them is easily understood when it is realised that many parts of Malta have become little parts of England. For years naval wives and families have lived on the island, while their husbands have been on duty. It has been said that Malta is as much a part of the British Fleet as a battleship.

Glorious Defence.

The steadfast way in which the Maltese have carried on in spite of almost daily air raids was recognised by the Prime Minister in the message which he sent to the Governor:

"The Cabinet watch with constant attention the resolute defence which your garrison and the people of Malta are making of the famous fortress and island. I have the conviction that you will make that defence glorious in British military history, and also in the history of Malta itself."

The proud confidence of Mr. Winston Churchill was much appreciated by Malta, whose Acting Governor, General Dobbie, sent the stout reply, worthy of Drake and Raleigh.

"We are fully determined, with God's help, to maintain the integrity of this part of the British Empire, whatever happens, and, whether the time be short or long, have every confidence in final victory."

A considerable British force, together with the Royal Malta Artillery, forms the garrison, assisted by the R. A. F., whose magnificent work is fully appreciated by all citizens of Malta. The British fighters never fail to attack the German and Italian bombers whenever they appear, driving them back and getting them down. The enemy has paid heavily for every visit, no fewer than 61 planes, chiefly German, having been shot down in the last two months.

Enemy Claim.

Despite scores of raids, surprisingly little damage has been done, and few military objectives hit. Not long ago the enemy claimed to have struck and destroyed an important railway, whereas it was only a tiny line chiefly for tourist traffic, leading to the old capital. The Maltese are so convinced of the important value of the R. A. F. fighters that that they have subscribed several thousands of pounds for the purchase of fighter planes.

A famous day in Maltese history is celebrated every September 8, which commemorates the tremendous victory over the Turks in 1565. The late Lord Lloyd as Secretary of State for the Colonies, took the opportunity of broadcasting to Malta on the eve of that day. "This date stirs every Maltese heart, for on that day far away down the long paths of history nearly 400 years ago the Maltese people threw back the enemy whose full might had been directed to battering down the defences of their beloved island. Malta, standing side by side with her sister island, Great Britain, and the great territories of the British democracies overseas, is again called upon to withstand the onslaught of the enemy."

Chequered History.

Lying as it does in the central part of the Mediterranean, Malta has had many owners, passing from the Phoenicians to the Greeks; then to Carthage, who had to yield to Rome; the Vandals and Goths held it for a time till Rome recovered it. The Saracens established a government there when Mohammedanism was spreading over Africa, till they were expelled by the Normans, who were occupying Sicily. Spain subsequently gained possession and retained it until 1530, when the Emperor Charles V handed it over to the Order of Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, who had just been driven from their home on the island of Rhodes.

The Turks made a determined effort to thrust out the Knights from Malta in 1565, when for four months the heroic Knights and people of Malta fought them relentlessly. As a correspondent to *The Times* points out, the civilian population took a prominent part, a tablet beneath the wall of the new fort

of St. Elmo bearing the words " To the glorious memory of the children who, during the siege of 1565, sacrificed their lives by the side of their elders for faith and country."

Knights Abolished.

After the Turks were driven off, the Knights of St. John maintained their sway until the appearance of Napoleon Bonaparte, on his way to Egypt. Owing to internal dissensions, Bonaparte occupied the island with ease, and during his stay of seven days abolished the historic Order, which never regained possession. Subsequently captured by the English, it has remained part of the British Empire, at the particular wish of the Maltese people.

Though few military objectives have suffered from the continual visits of Italian bombers, the civil population have had to endure destruction of property, though fortunately the loss of life has not been great. That they will have to face greater trials it is not difficult to forsee. But Malta certainly can " take it ".

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

26—3—41 to 2—4--41.

THE BATTLE OF MATAPAN.

RESOUNDING NAVAL VICTORY.

AN important naval engagement—the greatest yet of the war, described as an ' Italian Trafalgar ' for its devastating effect, took place on March 28th off MATAPAN in the Ionian sea resulting in a glorious victory for BRITAIN. The presence in these waters of Italian war-ships, including a battleship of the Littorio class, presumably with intent to intercept British convoys from EGYPT to GREECE, was first spotted by the British Reconnaissance aircraft. The main action took place on the 28th, when the enemy was chased over 200 miles of sea for 12 hours, and was defeated with a loss of seven ships and 4,000 personnel, and with severe damage to the battleship of the Littorio class. On the British side not a man was lost, nor was there any damage—not even a scratch to a single ship. A single naval aircraft alone was lost.

On the 29th morning British vessels aided by Greek destroyers rescued 850 men and 55 officers from the sunken vessels, and many more would have been saved, but for the brutal attack of German dive-bombers on the rescuing vessels. In the circumstances, there was nothing to do but to signal to the Italian Naval staff to despatch a hospital ship for succour.

The victory of MATAPAN is significant, being the first time that air-craft has been employed in naval warfare to reduce the enemy's speed on the sea. In consequence many ships were destroyed without any damage to the attacking vessels.

The presence of German officers and crew in the Italian vessels, and the participation of German aircraft in the conflict, furnish conclusive proof of ITALY's collapse and dependence on GERMANY.

THE INCIDENT OFF THE ALGERIAN COAST.

At a moment when in response to Pétain's appeal BRITAIN is relaxing the blockade to help FRANCE with food, it is indeed provocative that the VICHY Government should have thought fit to indulge in an act of hostility. On Sunday last, four merchant ships passing through the straits of Gibraltar under a French convoy, being suspected of carrying contraband were ordered by British battleships to stop to be inspected according to International Law. Thereupon the French shore batteries off the Algerian coast opened fire on the British battle-ships, which of course replied. When after the affair the battleships returned to Gibraltar they were once again attacked, this time from the air, by French bombers.

It is now becoming increasingly evident that Darlan may be no less dangerous than Laval, and that British mercy shown to VICHY may prove misplaced. Though Darlan has declared that he will not hand over the French Fleet to the enemy, in fact he could not, even if he would, his present attempts to run the British blockade are to say the least treacherous. While on the one hand FRANCE is des-cribed as 'starving' and 'begging' its food, on the other hand, two French vessels fully loaded with bananas, pine apples, and other luxuries destined for FRANCE were seized at Gibraltar. A statement recently made that GERMANY has made a free gift of wheat to FRANCE is also deceptive. It is in fact, a barter by which GERMANY will in return be supplied with war materials through MARSEILLES. As

Dr. Hugh Dalton, Minister of Economic Warfare has shown, in December and January alone 450 vessels with cargo aggregating half a million tons entered MARSEILLES, and it is known that more than half of the cargo was intended to be transported to the Axis countries.

The VICHY Government has sent a protest to BRITAIN about the brush off the Algerian coast as if it were the aggrieved party. The U. S. and British Governments are in mutual consultation over certain aspects of the blockade, but there is no likelihood of the relaxation of the blockade. Darlan's act has, to say the least, been unfriendly.

Sabotage.—Acts of sabotage, of enemy merchant ships in American ports, by setting fire or destroying the machinery have now become frequent. The UNITED STATES Government has already seized 69 of these ships, issued warrants to 100 German and 75 Italian crews on charges of violation of Immigration Laws, and ordered immediate prosecution of those implicated in acts of sabotage. It is likely that the seized ships will replace UNITED STATES ships which will be despatched to help BRITAIN. The Axis Governments have protested.

The Battle of the Atlantic.—Mr. Churchill's forecast of an early decisive victory in the Atlantic battle is already supported by the declining loss in British shipping. The losses for the last week have been definitely smaller than those for the four weeks preceding.

The Yugo-Slavian Coup.—The present war has been full of surprises, but nothing can compare with the *Coup d'état* which took place in YUGO-SLAVIA last week. The revolution was carried out in a few hours, and proved to be the most bloodless in history. At two o'clock on March 27, the young king Peter took over charge of the country from the Regents, and arrested the ministers responsible for signing the Axis pact. At seven in the morning the king's proclamation assuming power was broadcast, and large crowds demonstrated their joy in front of the palace and the offices of the British Legation, while mounted guards had to keep order at the German and Italian Legations. His Majesty the Emperor, and President Roosevelt sent their congratulations to the young king, who, in the words of General Smuts, had in a moment, become great, smashing to smithereens 'all the Hitlers, Goebbelses and other monstrosities of the human race'. In fact, the turn which events have recently taken in YUGO-SLAVIA

is the most comforting news since the Italian defeat in NORTH AFRICA and ALBANIA, and constitutes a major diplomatic defeat for Hitler. The first reaction to the news in BERLIN was one of stupefaction, followed by lame attempts to explain it away as a purely domestic affair which did not affect YUGO-SLAVIA's foreign relations. But the anti-Axis demonstrations, and the imprisonment of the ministers who signed the Pact cannot be so easily disposed of.

GERMANY has now started a 'war of nerves' threatening invasion, and complaining of villages burnt, women beaten, people murdered, Germans driven out and other 'atrocities'. Attempts are also being made to set the Croats and the Serbians by the ears. It is also reported that something like an ultimatum has been sent, demanding compensation for damage done to German property after the *coup*, publication and ratification of the Tripartite Pact, and demobilisation of the Yugo-Slav army. It would appear that the Yugo-Slav ministry is examining the Pact, but GERMANY wants complete subservience.

The Capture of Cheren: The fall of Asmara.—The fall of CHEREN reported in last week's bulletin has proved one of the thrills of the war. The capture was preceded by 52 days of frantic Italian efforts to hold the peace, and a fortnight's heroic British offensive over precipitous rocks, in which Indian troops have covered themselves with glory. His Majesty the King-Emperor has sent the following message in recognition of Indian valour:—

'*I heartily congratulate India on the part that her armed forces have played in the capture of Cheren. This victory in the face of heavy odds has added fresh laurels to India's military renown.*'

News has now reached of the capture of ASMARA, the capital of ERITREA, within 5 days of the fall of CHEREN. The way is now open for an advance on MASSAWA—ITALY's best port on the Red Sea.

A small enemy detachment, including, perhaps, some Germans, have occupied EL AGHELIA in LIBYA—after British troops had withdrawn from it. The episode has no military importance.

In ABYSSINIA, the fall is reported of GAMBEILA, an import post near the SUDAN border, of NEGHELLI, a key-position on the road from MOGADISHU to ADDIS ABABA, and of DIREDAWA, an important town on the ADDIS ABABA-JIBUTI Railway, and of CARSA, 20 miles beyond HARAR.

In ALBANIA the Greek offensive have been resumed. On March 26th the Italians asked for an armistice to bury the dead; so great were the casualties in the recent Italian counter-attacks.

Air Raids.—The recent raids on BERLIN are reported to have caused serious damage to its underground railways. Harassing attacks were carried out during the week on enemy shipping from the FRISIAN Islands to LA ROCHELLE. COLOGNE, DUNKIRK and CALAIS were attacked. In the raid on BREMEN, the casualties were 1,000 killed, and 7,000 injured.

The German operations over BRITAIN have been slight, and LONDON has been practically free of air-raids for the whole week. The supposed reason is the weather, though German raids have taken place in worse conditions. Other suggestions put forward are the success of British bombers in repelling Nazi night fighters, and the accumulation of a large stock of planes for a Balkan offensive.

America.—A mass evacuation of German nationals from the U.S.A. is under way, preliminary, as it is believed, to a rupture of diplomatic relations.

Many Italian Consulates are likely to be closed as a result of evidence collected by the Dies Committee of acts tending to obstruct the output of war material.

According to a Gallup poll, 53 per cent of the American public do not think that American armament production is proceeding fast enough. 52 per cent suspect that the slowness is due to strikes, and demand that strikes and lock-outs should be made illegal.

In a broadcast on March 30 President Roosevelt stated, "the agents of Nazism exploit the natural love for peace when actually they are serving the most brutal war-mongers of all times. They preached 'peace, peace' in the same way as the devil can quote scripture. Of course, the purpose of all this is to spread terror among us, but the effect has been only to fortify our determination."

An Anglo-American Agreement to lease British Atlantic bases to UNITED STATES was signed in LONDON on March 27.

Matsuoka's visit.—Having met Stalin in Moscow and Hitler in BERLIN, Matsuoka is now in ROME conferring with Mussolini. It is unfortunate that his BERLIN visit synchronised with the

coup d'état in YUGO-SLAVIA, and his ROME visit with the Italian disaster in the Ionian Sea. There is much speculation as to the objects of his visit, and Matsuoka is cleverly putting up a smoke screen of secrecy. But it is believed he has asked Moscow to stop sending supplies to CHINA, and to conclude a non-aggression pact, so that JAPAN may release her Manchurian forces for a southward adventure. In BERLIN and ROME he may play an astute game, judging for himself Hitler's chances of victory. If he sees a chance of success he may advise JAPAN to put CHINA in cold storage for a while, and synchronise her southward drive with Hitler's European offensive. Otherwise he may ask his country to renounce the Axis Pact, and sell herself to BRITAIN for certain advantages secured in CHINA.

German occupied Territory.—In HOLLAND the secret assassination of German soldiers has become a matter of frequent occurrence. Telegraph and telephone cables are cut. Recently a Dutch crew manning a German submarine headed off for the open sea and brought her to ENGLAND. Disaffection is spreading in AUSTRIA and martial law has been declared in NORWAY.

MISCELLANEOUS.

(1) **Syria.**—Serious disturbances, have broken out in SYRIA, and Military forces have been called out to quell the disturbances in DAMASCUS and ALEPPO. SYRIA has been promised a new Government with a Consultative Assembly, recognising her independence in principle.

(2) **Chile.**—There have been sensational revelations of late of Nazi penetration and infiltration into CHILE. An organisation similar to that set up years ago in HOLLAND exists, with its departments for espionage and propaganda. Money is spent lavishly on bribery, entertainments and other fifth-column activities.

(3) **Tangier.**—Mr. R. A. Butler informed the House of Commons that the ejection from TANGIER of the Representative of the Sultan of MOROCCO, and the substitution of a German Consulate did not affect British interests.

R. A. F. Raids over Enemy and Enemy-occupied territories.

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
24—3—41. (Monday).			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
DAY :—			
	Shipping off the DUTCH coast ...	1 plane.	1 ship sunk.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Troop positions in and around CHEREN.	...	Heavy loss.
	ADDIS ABABA—JIBUTI railway between AWASH and DIREDAWA.	No loss.	...
	Government buildings and the harbour at TRIPOLI.	No loss.	Fires and explosions started.
25—3—41. (Tuesday.)			
	ITALIAN DODECANESE.		
	The aerodrome and aircraft on the ground at SCARPANTO.	...	Many planes severely damaged.
	The aerodrome at CALATO. ...	...	...
	Shipping at ASTROPALIA island. ...	No loss.	Direct hit on the ship.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Enemy positions in CHEREN ...	...	Heavily damaged.
	The railway between ADDIS ABABA and DIREDAWA.	...	Trains, bridges and railway stations damaged.
	Motor transport on the road between ADDIS ABABA and DIREDAWA.	...	Machine-gunned.
	An enemy encampment north of GONDAR.	No loss.	Buildings damaged.
26—3—41. (Wednesday).			
	ALBANIA.		
	Support to the GREEK army in all fronts.	...	...

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
26—3—41.	**(Wednesday).**—*cont.*		
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Enemy positions in and around CHEREN.	...	Pounded.
	Aerial fight over the CHEREN area ...	No loss.	2 planes.
	Tracks, Rolling-stock and bridges along the ADDIS ABABA–JIBUTI railway.	...	Seriously damaged.
	Enemy motor transport near GONDAR.	...	Machine-gunned.
	Trains standing at the station at AWASH.	...	...
	Transport on the road to HARAR ...	No loss.	...
27—3—41.	**(Thursday).**		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	DAY :—		
	Harassing attacks on enemy shipping from the FRISIAN Islands to LA ROCHELLE.	...	...
	A supply ship in the harbour at ALDERNEY.	...	...
	NIGHT :—		
	Railway goodsyards at COLOGNE. **The factory area to the east of the RHINE and the main railway station** in DUSSELDORF.	...	Big fires started straddled with bombs. Fires started everywhere.
	Docks at DUNKIRK and CALAIS ...	...	Damaged.
	Naval Base at BREST ...	5 planes.	...
	ITALIAN DODECANESE.		
	Buildings and petrol dumps in the DODECANESE Islands.	No loss.	Fires started; Heavily damaged.
	ALBANIA.		
	Italian installations and troop positions in the various fronts.	...	Pounded.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	A camp near Lake RUDOLF ...	...	Buildings damaged.
	ADDIS ABABA—JIBUTI Railway. Troop Train east of the ABYSSINIAN capital.	No loss.	Machine-gunned.

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
28—3—41. (Friday.)			
	ITALY.		
	Aircraft on the ground and the aerodrome at LEECE (in the heel of of ITALY).	No loss.	Aerodrome damaged. Some planes set on fire. Many others damaged.
	MEDITERRANEAN.		
	Italian warships in the Eastern MEDITERRANEAN (This action took place in conjunction with British warships).	Not even one. casualty. 1 plane.	7 warships sunk. Casualties heavy.
	ALBANIA.		
	Offensive Reconnaissance over the war zones.	...	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Motor transport and troops on the ASMARA road.	...	250 vehicles damaged. Casualties very heavy.
	Military buildings at TECLESIN. ...	...	Many buildings directly hit.
	Gun emplacements and a bridge in the ASMARA area.	...	...
	Train Track and Stations on the DIREDAWA—ADDIS ABABA Railway.	...	Traffic seriously dislocated.
	Four trains between DIREDAWA and AWASH.	...	1 train set on fire ; 3 trains directly hit.
	Station buildings and a large warehouse at MIESSO.	...	Buildings blazed furiously.
	Motor transport on the DIREDAWA-AWASH road and near lake RUDOLF.	...	Straddled with bombs.
	Shipping, the wireless station, the main electric power station and the harbour at Tripoli.	No loss.	...

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
29—3—41.	**(Saturday).**		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
DAY :—			
	Aerodromes, road and rail transport and shipping in BELGIUM and Northern FRANCE.	No loss.	Heavily damaged.
NIGHT :—			
	A German anti-aircraft ship and a supply vessel off the DUTCH coast.	...	Direct hits registered. Also machine-gunned.
	The German anti-submarine vessel off the Estuary of the LOIRE.	...	The vessel sunk.
	German "invasion" ports along the English Channel.	No loss.	Explosions and fires started-
	ITALIAN ALBANIA.		
	Enemy supply and munitions depot in the Italian near positions.	No loss.	Explosions followed fire.
	Offensive reconnaissances over the ALBANIAN villages of BERAT, DUKAI and DUKATI.	No loss.	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	The town itself, the main station, buildings, tracks, sidings and a motor transport park in the ASMARA area.	...	Fires and explosions everywhere. Heavily damaged. Casualties heavy.
	Motor transport and troops in the ASMARA area.	...	Many vehicles destroyed and many damaged.
	Enemy encampment between CHEREN and ASMARA.	...	Military buildings demolished.
	Motor vehicles in the AWASH area ...	...	Machine-gunned.
	The railway station at METAHARI ...	...	Railway line damaged.
	Motor transport and buildings in the NAGI area.	No loss.	...

Date.	Targets.	Allied aircraft & R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
30—3—41. (Sunday.)			
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	The two German surface raiders (the SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU) berthed in BREST.	No loss.	Bombs fell near the two raiders.
	ITALIAN ALBANIA.		
	Military objectives in and near ELBASAN.	...	Buildings hit. Fires started.
	Offensive reconnaissance over TEPELENI area.	No loss.	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	The Docks, the main quay and petrol installations at TRIPOLI.	...	Fires started. Damage heavy.
	Enemy motor transport in the DESSIE and ALOMATA.	No loss.	Many vehicles set on fire.
	The Aerodrome at JIG JIGA ...	2 planes.	...

Enemy Raids over BRITAIN; BRITISH and ALLIED Territories.

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses	R. A. F. losses and results of air bombardment.
25—3—41. (Tuesday).	**BRITAIN.**		
DAY :—			
	Cruising over the coastal areas ...	...	No bombs dropped.
	A convoy in the NORTH SEA ...	...	No damage and no casualties.
26—3—41. (Wednesday).	**BRITAIN.**		
DAY :—			
	A town in WEST ENGLAND ...	...	Houses damaged.
	Two towns in South ENGLAND ...	1 plane.	Industrial buildings damaged.
	THAMES ESTUARY ...	1 plane.	...
	MEDITERRANEAN.		
	MALTA ...	...	Slight damage and no casualties.

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. losses and results of air bombardment.
27—3—41. (Thursday)—			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	A South-east coastal **town** ; South-east Coast Area.	...	Houses damaged. A few casualties.
	A convoy in the BRISTOL CHANNEL.	1 plane.	...
NIGHT :—			
	No air raid to night. ...	...	...
	GREECE.		
	Aerial fight over GREECE ...	2 planes.	...
28—3—41. (Friday).			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	South of BEACHY HEAD. ...	...	No damage.
NIGHT :—			
	No air activity.	...	...
29—3—41. (Saturday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	A few places in Eastern ENGLAND	...	Slight damage and a few casualties.
	A running train in South ENGLAND...	...	...
NIGHT :—			
	LONDON (only an alert) ...	...	No bombs dropped.
30—3—41. (Sunday).			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	Scattered points in Eastern ENGLAND, East and South-east SCOTLAND.	...	Little damage and no casualties.
NIGHT :—			
	No air activity. ...	...	...
31—3—41. (Monday).			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	ENGLISH CHANNEL ...	...	No damage.
NIGHT :—			
	A North-east coast **town**. ...	...	Some damage and a few casualties.
	South and South-west ENGLAND ...	...	...
	South WALES. ...	...	...

SIDE LIGHTS.

A Famous Victory. One of the American papers the other day spoke of the great Mediterranean battle as the "Italian TRAFALGAR". The odd prescience of the American Press which we commented on in this column last week is thus curiously exemplified, for it was fully 36 hours later that we heard over the radio, how very like to TRAFALGAR was this action, not in tactics, perhaps, but in gun-range and decisiveness. Who would have dreamed; in days of enormous guns and missiles and action at ten or more miles, that two fleets would be engaged at a few thousand yards, with ships' captains in a position to order *broadsides !!* Hearing the wireless description, one almost expected to hear a shout for grappling-irons and boarding-parties! Yet having once actually seen a warship go down, even the elation imparted by the magnificent seamanship and gunnery of Cunningham's fleet cannot prevent a shiver of horror and pity at the fate of those Italians. Imagine yourself one of the 1,700 people on a huge ship, her hull mortally maimed, her speed failing with every mile traversed in a dark sea in a frantic drive for land, haunted by overhead bombers, riding lower and lower and less and less evenly in the water, and ever slower and slower, until............And what about the officers and men of those cruisers trained all their lives to sail and fight a fast new ship, who, in their first engagement run up against a "Warspite" or a "Valiant" and navigators, engineers, gunners, engines, guns, and shapely hull, torpedo and A. A. crews, are blown out of the sea, *without having fired a single shot !*

On Balance. "Command of the sea"! Before war, and during war, to-day and throughout history, one of the most pregnant phrases in man's vocabulary of clichés. In the dark days we comforted ourselves that we had it! Every neutral reckoned that *if* the British really had it, they *might* still be able to stand up to the mightiest onslaught ever launched. The Germans genuinely believed that there was no such thing, but that if there were, "command of the sea" had devolved on their submarine fleet, aided by the harassing and dividing function of the large, swift Italian Navy, the not inconsiderable remnant of the French fleet, and the allegedly powerful flotillas of the Japs, to set off any American intractibility.

And though we felt that this vital point of vantage in every war was traditionally British and *would* be established, *it still had to be established*, especially after the fall of FRANCE. We could laugh perhaps at Mussolini's grandiose notion of the Mediterranean as *mare nostrum*, but while fast and heavily-armed battleships and cruisers, with their attendant hordes of

auxiliaries, still floated in the Adriatic, our 'command of the Mediterranean' was a comparative rather than an absolute term. We had to reinforce our Squadron heavily, at the cost of supremacy if not security elsewhere; a large fleet was pinned down to long sweeps and endless search, to the protection of convoys and the 'trailing of their coat' in the effort to bring the 'holding force' a Naval Power, mark you—to the issue. It was, or seemed, rather a negative 'command.'

Well, TARANTO began it, GENOA was a sidelight, and now the most crashing victory imaginable makes it certain that BRITAIN is still residuary legatee of sea-mastery. The implications are immense. We now have important units to spare from the Mediterranean; the mysterious rump of the French Fleet will have to think things over very hard; every wavering nation must now put 'paid' to the chance of anyone except the British being able to control maritime trade, convoy supplies, or land overseas expeditions; and the Axis Powers can only writhe with dismay and live in dread of the consequences.

Racing the weather.

Two or three weeks ago it became rather obvious that a race was on—an important race. It was the race of General Wavell's East African armies against the African monsoon. The fall of the Italian Empire might be a foregone conclusion; but not only for the sake of our ascendant prestige, but also for very material reasons, such as the release of troops, mechanised equipment and aeroplanes it was obviously important that we should finish the job, before the rains stagnated affairs for five or six months. It looks as if we have won that race. It has cost us more to work quickly, as even Indian Army casualty lists are beginning to show, but those good fellows who gave their lives will not have grudged them, they began to realize the issues, and a great deal of the magnificent result. HARAR, KEREN, DIREDAWA, and now ASMARA, all in a week or so, and against difficulties and odds which only the superb handling, and magnificent behaviour, of British and Indian troops make to appear insignificant. I have not looked up Burke to see what General Wavell's coat-of-arms is but "Wavell wins" would be no bad motto for his successors to carry on their shield.

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BRITAIN SPEAKS.

*Mr. **Phillip Noel Baker** has to-day chosen Poland for his subject.*

THE atmosphere of war, does not tend to foster the telling of the truth. There is a famous story from the early months of the last world war, which shows how news was manufactured. I'll tell it by giving you the exact text of items which appeared on succeeding days in that bloody autumn of 1914, in papers in Germany, France, Britain and Italy. From the "*Koelnische Zeitung*" at Cologne, "When the fall of Antwerp became known, the church bells were rung," meaning, of course, the church bells in Germany. From the "*Matin*" of France, "According to the "*Koelnische Zeitung*" the priests of Antwerp were compelled to ring the church bells when the fortress was taken." From the "*Times*" of London, "According to what the "*Matin*" has heard from Cologne, the Belgian priests who refused to ring the church bells when Antwerp was taken, have been driven away from their places." From the "*Corriere Della Sera*" of Milan, "According to what the "*Times*" has heard from Cologne, via Paris, the unfortunate Belgian priests who refused to ring the church bells when Antwerp was taken have been sentenced to hard labour." From the "*Matin*," of Paris, "According to information from the "*Corriere Della Sera*" from Cologne, via London, it is confirmed that the barbaric conquerors of Antwerp punished the unfortunate Belgian priests for their heroic refusal to ring the church bells by hanging them as living clappers, with their heads down." That is a typical example of how an atrocity story could be made.

In the past, atrocity mongering has nearly always been regarded as a part of making war. I have always thought it a particularly despicable part of making war—constantly being reminded of the atrocity of fighting, all that has left bitter memories behind, has helped to make the hatred from which new wars sprang. I say, with absolute conviction, that there has been no atrocity mongering in Britain during the present war. Neither our Government, nor our Press, nor our private propagandists have sought to paint the Nazis and the Fascists as blacker than they are indeed, for far too long we have failed to paint the truth about the people with which we are now at war, and even now, after 18 months of war, how many of us really know what Hitler's terror means? How many of us have a living picture in our minds of what his new order has already done to the civilisation, the culture, the prosperity of the Europe he has invaded and over-run? Yet it is nothing short of fact, and every free man and woman should face

these facts, should have a vivid picture of what Hitler's doctrine of cruelty and fear would mean in all our countries if this mad man's scheme of world dominion should be achieved.

A little while ago, I tried to tell you what the Nazis have done to their own country, to describe the pitiless grip which the Gestapo have obtained on the body, mind and soul of every German whether they be in the army or at home. I quoted only evidence from Germans whom I know, people whose integrity, honour and patriotism I could guarantee. Since I spoke, one of them has died in London from the delayed results of the tortures he endured in the concentration camps.

Tonight, I want to talk about Nazism in Poland, and again, I will only give you evidence of which I am absolutely sure. Not many weeks ago, a friend of mine escaped from Poland. He is a life long member and now a leading member, of the Polish Social Democratic party, a trades unionist, a man of international outlook who has always striven for friendship and good understanding between Poland and other nations of the world. Before he left, he toured the country collecting first-hand evidence of conditions, and trying to form a balanced estimate of what the Nazi governors of Poland had really done. He told me that he is convinced that it is Hitler's deliberate purpose to wipe out the State of Poland for good and all; to destroy every vestige of culture and education and national life among the Poles; to reduce their numbers by massacre and starvation, and to turn the millions who remain into helpless slaves. He is doing it by a merciless and systematic persecution which in scale and horror has probably been unequalled in the history of mankind. There is a popular saying in Poland to-day, that for the Nazis there are three kinds of Poles, those who have already been in prison, those who are in prison, and those who will soon be in prison. Of course every political party, and every national organisation has been broken up, all the workers movements have been disbanded, their property confiscated by the German State; the peasants have been no less persecuted than the workers in the towns, and above all, the intellectuals have been hounded down; many of the greatest Polish scholars are dead, killed by the treatment they received. All the Universities, the Technical and training colleges, even the secondary schools have been closed, museums, libraries, laboratories have been shut up; education, learning and culture are no longer for the Poles.

My friend did not get to know exactly how many Poles had been driven from their homes to make way for Germans, nor how many are in labour and concentration camps, but he had tried to make an honest guess. He believes that somewhere about 1,000,000 men have disappeared, into graves, and prisons and camps of forced labour of many kinds; he

believes that somewhere about $1\frac{1}{2}$ million have been stripped of all they own, and driven pitiless and starving to start again in a land where there is neither food nor work. And try to imagine what those importations mean. Another witness Dr. ? ? who lived in Warsaw till last September, has told us, these are his words, "Whole streets were taken at once, so that families were often broken up, mothers being separated from children only a few months old. Men, women and children were put into goods trucks; fifty or sixty packed into a truck and sealed without heating or food or water, for journeys which lasted sometimes for five or six days. As that was done in winter, often amid fifty decrees of frost, it is not surprising that often when the trucks were opened on their arrival half the people in truck were dead, and the other half suffering from frost bite."

To us, in our orderly, law-abiding country, it seems impossible that such things should really happen, but we know that they are the deliberate policy of the Nazi leaders. The German paper, published in Poland, quotes a speech by the head of the Nazi Government in Poland, in which he says to the Germans there, "We a e masters, as mas ers we must behave. The Pole is a servant to us, and the Pole may turn. We must inject a dose of iron into our final thrust, and never admit the idea that Poland may ever rise again." Hm! And the Nazis are hard. They try to crush resistance, and to stamp out every spark of Polish feeling by remorseless acts, which are strongly directed against the leaders against individuals, and against the masses too. Hitler used sometimes to talk of the soldier's chivalry. There has been no braver episode in the war than the defence of Warsaw by its gallant Mayor, Stavsinski. As the Nazis entered Warsaw, Stavsinski was sent to Dachau, and he has not returned. His fellow-sufferers all believe that he died under the tortures he received.

When the R. A. F. began to bomb the German factories in the Rhur, the Nazis tried to restart the Polish armament works. In one factory a trainer helped them. The next morning he was found dead at the factory gates. In revenge the Nazis drove 300 workmen from that factory to a forest, made them dig a great pit in a remote spot, machine gunned them till not one was left alive, buried them all together in the grave they had dug, and then tried to obliterate every sign, even of the grave; but in that last they failed. My social-democratic friend, had known a leader of the workers who were killed; that comrade led him in secret to the grave, and he brought a casket of earth from that sacred spot to England with him when he came. That was only of several similar stories which he told me. I could make you ill by repeating the kinds of horrors he described.

But with all this bestial cruelty, has Hitler crushed the spirit of the Poles? Well, if we had no evidence

at all from Poland we in this country should feel quite certain that he had not, for here in Britain we have many Poles. The officer in command of our fighter aircraft in the south of England, told me the other day that one squadron of Polish pilots have brought down the amazing total of 103 German aircraft in a single month. He said their daring and their skill were both superb. Two weeks ago, he sent some of them on a daylight raid to get some Nazi aerodromes in France. One of them, who was inspecting the......of his objective, had gone so low, that he pulled out with 25 yards of high tension electric cable wound around his tail plane. Another had attacked a gun emplacement with such determination that his machine had actually struck an earth bank, and he came back with half a sand-bag on his wing. And the Poles in Poland are like the Poles who we have here. We have ample evidence from Poland that that is so. My friend tells me that in all his tours throughout the country he never found a single sign of compromise let alone of surrender. Every man and every woman is determined that the Nazis shall be beaten, that the freedom and the hope of Poland shall be restored, and the spirit of the people is awake in Poland as it never was before. They are resisting now. They are risking death to obstruct and sabotage the Nazis. In that factory of which I spoke, the sabotage goes on, the victims have already risen from 600 to 1,000 and they are preparing for the moment when they can rise again in a mighty effort to help us to liberate their land. My friend gave me manifestos which have been secretly distributed from one end of the country to the other. They are very moving documents. They call on every Pole to struggle on till the new Poland, free and independent, founded on democracy and social justice can be made. They declare that the foreign policy of this new Poland must depend on strict co-operation and perfect understanding between the nations of the world, and in particular with the nations with whom Poland has to live in harmonious and neighbourly co-existence. One of the manifestos ends with these words: "In struggling for the freedom of Poland, we are struggling for the destinies of all the oppressed nations, under the most honourable of slogans, for our freedom and yours." Remember the tragic conditions in which these manifestos were composed. Can you doubt that this noble Polish people has played its brave part in world affairs?

U. S. PRESS ON THE WAR
MUSSOLINI'S ROLE IN MODERN HISTORY
BRITAIN'S POSITION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
CONTINUANCE OF POLISH RESISTANCE.

The following are extracts from American Press comments on the war during the period February 27—March 6:

FRENCH REACTIONS.

AMERICANS returning from Europe via *S. S. Siboney* on February 27, brought eye-witness accounts of growing resistance to the Nazis in France. William Mock, a student, declared: "Agitation against the Germans and the Frenchmen collaborating with them is steadily growing. The French put up signs for De Gaulle, Petain and Roosevelt and the Nazis tear them down. M. Laval is well guarded at all times and fears assassination. On December 5 there was a rumour that he had been killed, and the Nazis rounded up all Englishwomen in Paris and put them in concentration camps. Ninety per cent of the French people believe that England will win".

Harry Cowan, attached to the Bendix Corporation in Paris, described the ruse whereby 437 pilots and ground workers at the Nazi air base at Merignac, near Bordeaux, were either killed or wounded, 17 planes smashed and hangars burned out. "Five men rode up to the Commandant's office one night during the month of December and presented their credentials as Staff Officers and an order permitting them to take up two pursuit ships for trial runs.

"The Commandant swallowed the story. The men flew towards the sea. An hour later, they returned and signalled for ground lights. Every floodlight was turned on, but instead of landing the planes zoomed off. On their heels came a large R. A. F. squadron which rained bombs on the base. The Nazi commandant was subsequently executed".

PETROL FIGURES ARE IMPORTANT.

The *Detroit News* on February 4 reported the speech made by Dr. Robert Wilson, Director, of the Petroleum Unit of the office of Production Management, to the Local Engineering Society, in which he said: "War planes now operating from England use 100 octane gas whereas the best the Nazis produce is 90 octane. The difference adds 35 m. p. h. to the speed of British fighters. If out of their 24,000 planes the Nazis used 8,000 in one attack on a single day, the raid would consume six or seven million gallons of gasoline, thus cutting into her gas reserves dangerously".

OFFSETS SUPERIORITY.

The newspaper's leader writer comments: "Assuming that the British continue to control the seas and keep oil products moving where they are needed from her own possessions and from the United States, it will largely offset Nazi superiority in the number of planes. Many British bombing raids are directed against German gasoline depóts and refineries, thus striking at vital German spots".

A GAMBLER'S THROW.

"The Wanderer" writes in the *Catholic Journal* of February 27 :—

In drawing the entire Balkan region into the war and risking a dreadful war on two fronts, Hitler's hands are forced by the necessity of saving Italy from certain defeat at the hands of the British and their Greek Allies. Hitler, the former Austrian, knows that he has never been popular with the great mass of the Italian people. The extent of Italy's fiasco and the resultant difficulties placed in Germany's way are admitted by Mussolini. A few months ago Mussolini raged that Britain lied to the world of the Italian set-backs. Of the statesmen of modern times few have played a sorrier role than Mussolini has in his latest speech. Now it seems probable that Mussolini will be destroyed by the horrible landslide he helped to set in motion. Mussolini's confession must have come as a terrible blow to the people of Germany where a controlled press has sought for months to cover up the true situation. The vaunted *Blitzkrieg* is neither a German patent nor their monopoly. They know that Britain's Mediterranean possition is unshaken.

POLISH RESISTANCE CONTINUES.

The *Catholic World* of March has an article by Count Antoni Tarnowski in which he says : The territory of Poland is in German and Russian hands, but the Polish nation goes on fighting. Polish troops have fought in every country that offered armed resistance to Nazi invasion. To-day, her soldiers are fighting side by side with the British in England, Scotland, Egypt and Greece. The Polish Government has preserved its legal status even in exile. The Polish people are determined to stand firm, opposing Germany and Russia until their sovereign territory is restored.

The *Buffalo Echo* of February 28 writes : In this whole business no one wants bloodshed. War to a Canadian or an Englishman becomes an avenue by which justice can be established. To the fighting Briton defeat would mean the annihilation of his culture, which he believes is supremely more desirable than any "New Order" fashioned by totalitarians.

BRITAIN WILL WIN.

The *Boston Transcript* of February 3, reports: Dr. Berbert-Rosinski, Ex-Lecturer at the German Naval Staff College in Kiel, and his collaborator, General Karl Haushofen, as having said: "The British fleet and British character will be decisive in this war. I am as confident as it is possible to be that Britain will win and win overwhelmingly".

In the *New York World Telegram* of March 5, Raymond Clapper, writes: The "New Order" in Europe is being inflicted on helpless peoples by methods so shameful that they must be kept secret............Officials here have received information as to the frightful methods used in the destruction of Poland. The Germans undertook a programme of deporting 1,000,000 Polish labourers to Germany. This was regarded by officials here as slavery of the most brutal and mediæval type. The Germans also have undertaken to exterminate the intellectual classes in Poland. Reports of physical atrocities have been received, but officials discount them in the absence of reliable witness verification. They are interested in the greater atrocity of the deliberate murder of a nation, and the transformation of a people into a mass of slaves.

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EAGER TO FINISH OFF KEREN.

BRITISH AND INDIAN TROOPS ON CONTINUAL PATROL.

CHEERFUL DESPITE MIDDAY TEMPERATURE OF 140.

By an eye-witness in the field.

[*In a speech to the Council of State on March 10, H. E. the Commander in-Chief in paying a tribute to the Indian troops in Africa recalled the " warm message of congratulation from General Wavell on the wonderful performance of Indian troops in what he described as 'the most brilliant pursuit of the Italians from Kassala to Keren'". Below is a despatch from an eye-witness in the field.*]

KEREN, as seen from one of our observation posts on a high mountain to the west, is a flourishing and picturesque military station and trading centre. It is an important communication centre lying on the "strada" which connects Asmara, capital of Eritrea, with Agordat, Barentu and Tessenei, now in our hands.

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Keren is also on the railway which runs from Massawa, Eritrea's only port, to Biscia, about 20 miles to the west of Agórdat. Keren lies between the rivers Baraka and Ain-Seba and **controls the whole of northern Eritrea.** The town is on an escarpment which rises gradually towards Asmara. Of all the positions held by the Italians Keren is strategically the most easily defensible.

It was evidently the enemy's first plan to hold the mountains and gorge at Keru when he withdrew his forces from Kassala, but Indian forces attacked him in the rear and he fled. He then thought Agordat was impregnable. A brilliant plan by the British Commander brilliantly executed by Indian troops evicted him. Since February 3 he has been holding the heights near Keren.

CONTINUAL PATROLS.

Early in the siege the enemy was forced to vacate one ridge, now known as Cameron Ridge, which overlooks Keren and the main road running into the town. However the defenders have held on stoutly to their remaining positions which, in many cases, unfortunately, overlook our own. There is artillery and mortar activity and patrolling is continual. The arduous work of patrolling "No Man's Land", a valley with steep and thornbush covered ground, with large boulders and trees, is being carried out chiefly by the Mahrattas and British troops. There have been occasional brushes with enemy patrols, and we have been decided winners in these encounters.

Supplies have to be carried up to Cameron Ridge by hand. In some places the slopes are at an angle of 45 degrees or even more; but the carriers continue their work uncomplainingly. At normal speed it requires **nearly two hours to climb the mountain.**

In addition there is the heat of the sun to contend against: the temperature out of the shade is between **140 and 160 degrees during the midday hours.**

DESERTIONS FROM ITALIAN RANKS.

There is no doubt that the morale of the native levies among the enemy forces, particularly the Abyssinian conscripts, is low. The entry of the Emperor of Abyssinia into his country at the head of allied forces has led to many desertions from the Italian Colonial battalions. Many have come from Keren, though up to the moment they desert they fight courageously. There are rumours that the Italians have armed the villagers and offered large rewards for the capture of deserters.

The total number of prisoners taken since the beginning of the advance into Eritrea is well over 6,000 and includes three Germans. The Germans were members of the German Volunteer Company formed from crews of

German ships which took refuge at Massawa early in September 1939. These Germans have apparently been drafted to units of the Italian army. The three prisoners were captured in light tanks, which were put out of action by our own tanks during the battle of Agordat.

By radio and pamphlets the Italian army in Eritrea are kept well acquainted with the events which are rapidly crumbling Mussolini's African Empire. And more and more deserters come in—nearly 200 on a single day.

ALERT AND AMAZINGLY CHEERFUL.

During the last few days I have been able to observe Indian troops, now resting, who took part in the attack on Cameron Ridge. One battalion was on the ridge for ten days, tireless, alert. They are enjoying their rest and are amazingly cheerful. Punjabis, Jats, Rajaputs, Sikhs, Mahrattas—all are awaiting their chance to help finish off Keren. As one travels along the "strada" up to the front line early in the evening, one can see and hear the cheerfulness of the Indian troops. A band has been started in one battalion and of an evening Indian music is played on improvised instruments. Petrol tins are useful as drums.

The news in Urdu from Delhi is listened to with great interest by Indian troops. The reception is very good and clear—almost as clear as London. The news comes through about 5 p. m. (local time) and the men gather round the battalion radio set. Items of news are conveyed to those on the Ridge by water carriers, and ammunition carriers and stretcher-bearers.

"ROAD CLOSED: ENEMY AT WORK".

The R. A. F. has been playing a prominent part in the battle. The airmen have been of great assistance to our gunners, acting as "spotters" of enemy emplacements. Several enemy guns are known to have been silenced as a result of this R. A. and R. A. F. co-operation.

Enemy artillery continues to be active; so much so that our Sappers have put up notices on the main road near the front line—"Road closed: enemy at work". But the enemy fire is regarded as a nuisance rather than a danger: few casualties, either to personnel or to mechanical transport, have been caused by enemy shells, while our own artillery has been so effective that it is known the enemy has already vacated one Ridge owing to our fire.

All troops are in excellent health and ready and eager.

Most interesting perhaps is the northern attack by General Platt's force. Italian resistance in Eritrea has been concentrated about Keren on the railway line forming the backbone of Eritrea's communications, leading from

the coast at Massawa to Agordat. The Italians saw the strength of the position of Keren. It occupies a knot in hilly country confronting the west with a gorge—like an avenue—and is well covered on all flanks by similarly intractable country.

In this area the Duke of Aosta has concentrated from two to three divisions and when driven out from Agordat the troops fell back rapidly and hastily on this position. The most recent developments are the junction of the two forces, which crossed the north-western border and landed at Mersataclai on the Red Sea coast, and their advance southwards. A battalion of the Free French forces assisted in the capture of Cub Cub on the southward march, and now this northern column is in contact with the Italian defences about 15 miles to the North of Keren. The commander of this position appears to have thrown out a flank north-eastwards, and with the forces at his disposal Platt cannot expect to dislodge the defenders rapidly without risking heavy loss.

ANGLO-AMERICAN CONSULTATIONS ON FOOD FOR FRANCE

COMMON POLICY TO BE FRAMED

IMPORTANCE OF NOT HELPING AXIS.

(By the Diplomatic Correspondent of the Daily Telegraph).

BRITAIN and the United States will frame a common policy on the question of allowing food shipments to pass through the British blockade when destined for unoccupied France. Consultations are proceeding between the two capitals.

In London it is not overlooked that the **United States is diplomatically represented in Vichy, and has easier contacts with French North Africa than can normally be established by Britain**.

These circumstances may predispose the British Government to fall in with American views on the delicate matters raised by Admiral Darlan's atest pronouncements to the effect that he will, if necessary, challenge the blockade in order to free 40 million people in France.

In the course of the next week or so, it may be anticipated, conclusions will be reached in London and Washington on the ultimate policy which should govern the whole question.

Commenting on the situation in a cable to the *Chicago Daily News*, the London correspondent of that newspaper declared: "If it were not for Washington, the British Government would be ready to call Vichy's bluff and accept Admiral Darlan's challenge that he was ready to use force to get French ships through the British blockade.

"Washington apparently has a deep-seated idea that, while appeasement everywhere else in the world has proved a dismal failure, the anti-British and pro-German rulers of Vichy can be appeased by shipments of American foodstuffs to France.

"Since the British Government is not in a position to argue with the United States beyond a certain point, it is prevented from giving Admira Darlan the answer which the strategy of this war seems to demand. But as Washington is in the midst of negotiations with Vichy and the British have consequently been requested to "go slow", London has little alternative but to agree.

"Even in this war to the death in which Britain is engaged, the **Government and people are more than willing to lift the blockade so that food might go into France if it were possible to ensure that it reached the French and not the Germans.** But at present a large percentage of the food which reaches France, whether from abroad or from her own colonies, goes to Germany and Italy.

"If the United States were prepared to protect the French by seeing imported foods actually reach the French people there would not be the slightest objection".

The correspondent goes on to point out that Britain is allowing food to go to Spain because she has reason to believe that none of this goes on to Germany or Italy.

He adds, however, that at the present moment **all the food going into France is carefully supervised by Germans who seize the greater part of it.** "In some cases only 20 per cent of the shipments reaches the French people. In others they are allowed to retain 30 per cent."

Examples of Misleading Statements in Enemy Broadcasts to India and the Near East for the period March 17—23, 1941.

A.—BROADCASTS IN ENGLISH.

LORD HAW-HAW IS ASTONISHED.

REFERRING to the registration of British women for work in war industries, Lord Haw-Haw said on March 18 that he "never thought it possible that the old-school cads who rule the country would have gone quite so far as to put women into the firing-line." Quite apart from there being very little of the "old-school" about Mr. Ernest Bevin, who has introduced the new measure, **it was not he but Hitler who first "put women into the firing-line"—at least 10,000 British women have already been killed by Hitler's bombers since the war began.**

The willingness of Britain's women to serve against the Nazis in any capacity necessitated by national interests may have astonished Lord Haw-Haw, but Britain has handed him several other surprises in recent months—and there are more to come.

"ONLY 20 DESTROYERS."

The German radio on March 20 waxes very sarcastic over the fact that "the British Navy has only been able to put 20 new destroyers into commission since the beginning of the war." Nazi sarcasm is here rather badly misplaced, since the commissioning of this new batch of 20 destroyers (revealed in the latest issue of Janes' *Fighting Ships*) represents **a remarkable achievement by British shipyards, which began the building of these vessels in the summer of 1939 and completed them within 18 months.**

It is strange, too, that the Germans should have forgotten that **the British Navy "has been able to put" another 50 destroyers into commission recently**—since their transfer by the U. S. infuriated Goebbels' propagandists so much that for weeks they were scarcely able to talk about anything else.

BULGARIA CO-OPERATES.

The latest addition to the German radio's collection of testimonials to the Nazi "New Order" comes from the Bulgarian Minister of Railways, who on March 18, was quoted as saying that "the Bulgarian people were making an effort to co-operate with the other European nations in creating a new and better order based on equality and justice."

No more appropriate "New Order" advocate could have been chosen than Bulgaria's Railway Minister, for **within 48 hours came news of the**

derailment of two trains on the German-controlled Bulgarian railways, together with the blowing up of bridges and viaducts.

DUTCHMEN ARE NOT DECEIVED.

Berlin, on March 20, quotes "official circles in Amsterdam" for the opinion that R. A. F. raids on Holland are intended to terrorize the civilian population. Berlin, however, does not attempt to explain why Britain should want to terrorize Dutch civilians—who are almost 100 per cent pro-British and certainly 100 per cent. anti-German.

Dutchmen know that British bombs are aimed at (and hit) Nazi military targets in the Netherlands—particularly the great oil-storage tanks at Rotterdam, which were heavily attacked on five nights last week. They know, too, that after these R. A. F. raids on military objectives in Holland, German planes frequently bomb Dutch residential districts, in order to lead the Dutch to believe that the British have been attacking them.

This typically Nazi manœuvre, which altogether fails to deceive Queen Wilhelmina's subjects, has been attested by numerous reports reaching Dutch official circles in London.

B.—BROADCASTS IN ASIATIC LANGUAGES.

BRITAIN'S FINANCES.

On March 16 the Nazi broadcast in Hindustani stated that Britain's financial condition was so bad that she was begging for help throughout the world. That Britain's finances are remarkably sound will be demonstrated by the fact that during the 46 days from Jan. 1 to Feb. 15, the total expenditure in Great Britain amounted to £559½ millions and the State's income aggregated to £562½ millions, so that expenditure was fully covered. **Another proof of the public's faith in the country's financial stability is provided by the fact that between Nov. 1939 and Feb. 1941, 20 to 25 million small savers voluntarily contributed to the State over £603 millions in savings.**

NAZI "QUOTATIONS."

The German broadcast in Hindustani, Persian and Arabic ascribed, on March 21, to a correspondent of the Swedish paper *Svenska Dagbladet* a statement to the effect that he visited twenty large British towns and found the industrial areas in ruins.

It will be recalled that on March 10, this same German broadcast had on the alleged authority of the Swedish Minister of Justice, painted a lurid picture of rigid newspaper censorship in Britain. **Either the British censorship is very lax or else the Nazi "quotation" from the Swedish journalist's account was cooked up in Berlin.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

WAR FILMS

The War Information Bureau have great pleasure in announcing that with the sanction and kind assistance of the Darbar their Lecturers will shortly be able to take round with them a series of Film programmes illustrative of the War in its various aspects.

These programmes consist in part of actual cinematography in war zones by the 20th Century Fox Film Corporation, and partially of cognate Indian subjects photographed by the organisation set up for the purpose by the Government of India, through the Bombay Government. There are three separate pictures in each programme, and the Bureau feel sure that they will prove a welcome addition to the lectures, and to the Weekly Bulletin.

The War Fund Entertainments Committee have been good enough to present the Bureau with a Station-wagon in which to convey the projectors, screens and films to the lecture centres, but in order to facilitate the working of the new lecture-programme necessary to provide some sixty centres in the State with a fresh cinema-show once every month, we particularly request the public of Pudukkottai to :—

(*a*) note that the usual time of the lecture will be **6.00 p. m.** or **6.30 p. m.** (as notified).

(*b*) **be absolutely punctual** at these lectures, since the War Information Bureau van will have to serve two centres on same evening.

Practical experience proves that at least one thousand persons can see these films with comfort, so when you hear of a Lecture announced for your village,

COME........BUT BE PUNCTUAL.

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES

OF THE

Pudukkottai State War Information Bureau.

1941—

LECTURE XXXVIII.

April ... 5, Saturday...	Town Hall	...	6.30 p. m.
6, Sunday ...	Narthamalai	...	6.30 p. m.
7, Monday ...	Narthamalai	...	6.30 p. m.
8, Tuesday ...	Arimalam	...	6.00 p. m.
	Kilanilai	...	6.30 p. m.
9, Wednesday	Kiranur	...	6.00 p. m.
	Nanjur	...	6.30 p. m.
10, Thursday	Perungalur	...	6.00 p. m.
	Adanakkottai	...	6.30 p. m.
11, Friday ...	Poovarasagudi	...	6.00 p. m.
	Venkatakulam	...	6.30 p. m.

LECTURE XXXIX.

12, Saturday ...	Town Hall	...	6.30 p. m.
13, Sunday ...	Tiruvappur	...	5.00 p. m.
	Vayalogam	...	6.00 p. m.
	Kudumiamalai	...	6.30 p. m.
14 Monday ...	Tirumayyam	...	6.00 p. m.
	Konapet	...	6.30 p. m.
15, Tuesday ...	Nachandupatti	...	6.00 p. m.
	Virachilai	...	6.30 p. m.
16, Wednesday	Rajagiri	...	6.00 p. m.
	Viralimalai	...	6.30 p. m.
17, Thursday ...	Panayappatti	...	6.00 p. m.
	Rangiam	...	6.30 p. m.
18, Friday ...	P. Puduppatti	...	6.00 p. m.
	Vendampatti	...	6.30 p. m.

SUPPORT
THE STATE WAR EFFORT

BY TAKING TICKETS IN THE

GREAT WAR FUND RAFFLE

Conducted by
The State War Fund Entertainments Committee,
with the authority and under the auspices of the Darbar

CLOSING DATE 15-6-41 ⋄ DRAW ON 23-6-41

BIG MONEY FOR LUCKY WINNERS
ON
HIS HIGHNESS THE RAJA'S BIRTHDAY

300 PRIZES

1st	PRIZE	Rs.	7,500	
2nd	PRIZE	,,	5,000	
3rd	PRIZE	,,	2,500	
2	PRIZES	,,	1,000	each.
5	,,	,,	500	,,
90	,,	,,	100	,,
100	,,	,,	50	,,
100	,,	,,	15	,,

Sri Brihadamba State Press, Pudukkottai. 1,000—5-4-41.